

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 229791

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JCS:WLAFFERTY (INFO)

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NSC:MPOWER (SUBSTANCE)

ACDA/IR:THIRSCHFELD

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S/S - MR. GAMMON

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R 212124Z NOV 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION NATO

INFO AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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USNMR SHAPE FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: USAF F-111 ATTRITION RATE ASSUMPTIONS FOR NATO

SGTA ANALYSIS

REF: A. NATO 4642 B. NATO AC/281-DS(73)15, ANNEX III

VIENNA FOR USDEL MBFR

1. THIS MESSAGE RESPONDS TO MISSION REQUEST (PARA 9, REF A)
FOR SUPPORTING RATIONALE FOR F-111 DATA PROVIDED FOR SGTA

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 229791

USE IN ITS COMPUTER SIMULATIONS. US OPERATIONAL EXPERIENCE

OVER A MORE THAN 30 YEAR PERIOD HAS SHOWN THAT AIRCRAFT COMBAT ATTRITION HAS VARIED CONSIDERABLY DEPENDING UPON SUCH DRIVING FACTORS AS INTENSITY AND DURATION OF CONFLICT, ENEMY DEFENSES AND ATTACKING AIRCRAFT COUNTERMEASURES. EMPIRICAL DATA COMPILED FROM THE SECOND WORLD WAR ONWARD INDICATE A RANGE OF LOSSES FROM ONE AIRCRAFT PER 1000 SORTIES FLOWN TO APPROXIMATELY 10 PER 1000 SORTIES.

2. FOR GAMING PURPOSES, IT CAN BE ASSUMED THAT QUALITATIVE IMPROVEMENTS IN AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS AND DEFENSIVE COUNTERMEASURES, TACTICS, ETC. CAN KEEP PACE WITH IMPROVEMENTS IN DEFENSES AGAINST ATTACKING AIRCRAFT. IF THIS ASSUMPTION IS ACCEPTED FOR GAMING PURPOSES ONLY, THEN IT CAN BE FURTHER ASSUMED, FOR GAMING PURPOSES, THAT AIRCRAFT ATTRITION WOULD FALL WITHIN THE RANGE OF ATTRITION DATA

EXTRAPOLATED FROM PAST EXPERIENCE. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THIS EXPERIENCE BASE INCLUDES DATA ON F-111 OPERATIONS AGAINST FAIRLY HEAVY DEFENSES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA (NORTH VIETNAM).

3. GIVEN THAT THE F-111 IN THIS GAME IS ASSUMED TO BE ATTACKING TARGETS IN EUROPE AT NIGHT, AT LOW ALTITUDE AND RELATIVELY HIGH AIR SPEEDS, AND ON SINGLE SHIP MISSIONS USING ECM, IT IS PROBABLE THAT F-111 ATTRITION EXPERIENCED WOULD FALL TOWARD THE LOWER END OF THE RANGE OF FIGURES CITED ABOVE. HOWEVER, EVEN LEAVING ASIDE THE QUESTION OF THE MORE SOPHISTICATED WARSAW PACT DEFENSES SUCH AS THE SA-6 AND SA-7 SAM SYSTEMS, IT IS NOT IMPROBABLE THAT THE DENSITY OF SA-2 AND SA-3 SYSTEMS AND CONVENTIONAL AAA DEFENSES WILL BE HIGHER THAN THAT ASSUMED FOR SGTA GAMING PURPOSES. FURTHER, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT CURRENT USAF WAR PLANNING FOR NATO ASSUMES 10 AIRCRAFT LOSSES PER 1000 SORTIES FLOWN, INCLUDING LOSSES ON THE GROUND (REF B, ANNEX III, P. 1).

4. ON BALANCE, THE F-111 ATTRITION RATE (0.003) PREVIOUSLY PROPOSED FOR SGTA USE APPEARS ACCEPTABLE WHEN USED WITH THE CURRENT ASSUMPTIONS OF THIS GAME REGARDING F-111 CAPABILITIES AND WARSAW PACT DEFENSES. HOWEVER, IN
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SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 229791

LIGHT OF INFORMATION GIVEN ABOVE AND SOME QUESTIONING FROM SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE SGTA ABOUT THE VALIDITY OF THE .003 FACTOR PRESENTLY BEING GAMED, IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE ALSO TO USE THE .010 ATTRITION FACTOR TO BOUND THE AREA OF UNCERTAINTY. KISSINGER

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